

Grangers plan to focus on noxious weed problem

HARRISBURG — Charles E Wismer, Jr., Master of the Pennsylvania State Grange, announced, Friday his organization's major priority for the coming year would be to solve the noxious weed dilemma facing the state's agricultural industry. "The deciding factor was the Game Commission's

agreement to support legislation allowing the Secretary of Agriculture to declare a weed "noxious" through legislation," Wismer stated. "We tried to accomplish this in the last Legislative Session," Wismer noted, "but due to the amount of opposition we encountered,

we had to abandon that approach and settle for designating Johnsongrass a noxious weed." When a weed is declared noxious, its eradication from Pennsylvania soils becomes mandatory by law. It is also illegal to sell, transport, or grow that weed

Besides Johnsongrass, the Canadian Thistle is another weed already declared noxious. At this time, it takes an act of the State Legislature to add a weed to the list. The Game Commission's concession to support the legislation came during a meeting called by State Representative Sam Hayes. Approximately forty Huntingdon county farmers came to the State Capital to find out why no action had been taken to declare multi-flora rose a noxious weed.

Hayes immediately called a meeting inviting the Game Commission, the State Agriculture Department, and the farm organizations. During the meeting, State Master Wismer called on State Agriculture Secretary, Penrose Hollowell, to ensure that Penn State University begin research on multi-flora rose eradication. He also called on the Ag Department to begin testing eradication methods on the institutional farms in the 1981 crop year. The state's institutional farms were

recently turned over to the Ag Department by the Department of Public Welfare. Another weed receiving mention by the Huntingdon County farmers and the State Grange as deserving the noxious weed designation was autumn olive. Autumn olive is a thorny, woody plant bearing a brownish berry being grown and propagated by the Game Commission as a wildlife cover and food provider. It was noted by many of the farmers present that it took over many otherwise useful pastures more quickly than multi-flora rose.

"Thorns on the autumn olive are worse than the ones on the multi-flora rose," one farmer noted. "One of my combine's tires was punctured by an olive thorn this fall." Due to public outcry that does not yet match that against multi-flora rose, the Game Commission has already decreased production of the autumn olive by "fifty percent."

Realizing simple declaration of one weed or another by the Legislature as not being the solution, State Representative Sam Hayes charged State Agriculture Secretary, Penrose Hollowell, with the duty of drafting legislation to allow noxious weed designation. He urged Hollowell to have the legislation drafted by early February. He also called on the Game Commission to consider stopping production of the autumn olive at their next meeting in late January. Indicating his wish not to be blindsided when the legislation came up for consideration, he warned all the groups present, cooperation was necessary if anything was to be accomplished.

In another related effort, he also charged Ag Secretary Penrose Hollowell to ensure that the Soil Conservation Service would not advocate the use of either multi-flora rose or autumn olive for cover on abandoned mine sites.

Vitamin E deficiency costs cattlemen \$\$\$

NUTLEY, N.J. — Obvious cases of Vitamin E deficiencies are rare, but marginal deficiencies aren't, according to a spokesman for the Department of Agriculture & Animal Health. Severe lack of Vitamin E results in nutritional muscular dystrophy (white muscle disease) in cattle, a disease chiefly affecting the muscles including the heart. A marginal deficiency of Vitamin E results in less than optimum performance.

Studies on the effects of feeding cattle supplemental Vitamin E show improved weight gains and feed efficiency. These studies, consisting of 30 observations, were conducted with beef cattle in the Southeast, Midwest and West coast regions of the

United States. Results show that feeding supplemental Vitamin E at rates ranging from 10 to 30 IU per head daily increased average daily gain of cattle from 1.5 to 8.1 percent compared to those not receiving supplemental Vitamin E. The greatest improvement in average growth rate resulted from feeding 50 IU of supplemental Vitamin E per head daily.

The improved performance with Vitamin E supplementation suggests that marginal Vitamin E deficiencies (deficiencies associated with suboptimum performance) do exist and can prove costly through poor performance.

Vitamin E occurs mainly in plant life and cattle's primary source of Vitamin E

is from feedstuffs. However, the Vitamin E content is reduced when feedstuffs are processed using heat, drying, grinding, cooking, pelleting or steam rolling and when the feedstuffs are damaged due to molds or insect contamination.

Because many variables affect the Vitamin E content of feedstuffs, a herd's Vitamin E needs should be carefully evaluated to see if supplemental vitamins can improve performance, the spokesman concluded.



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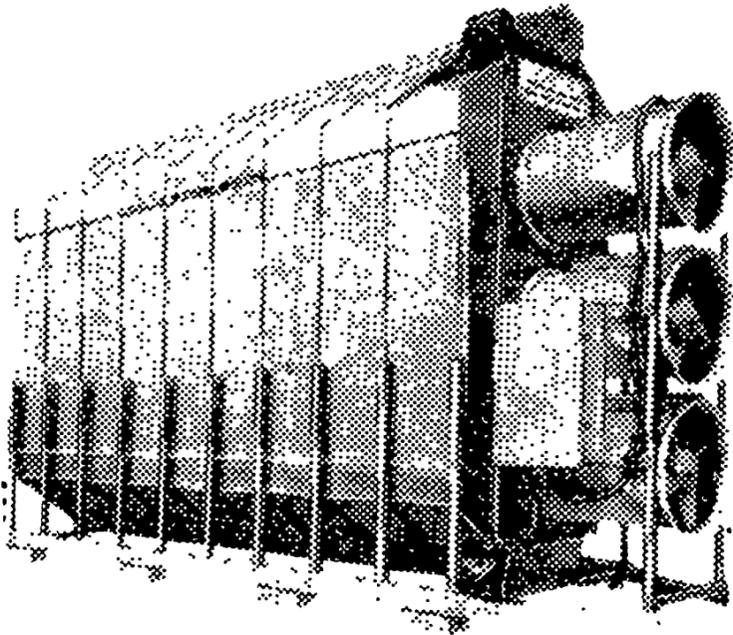
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